TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS

Category: **Subcategory:**	ITC Number: ITC-WEB-0507 If approved in January **Name:** Style/Markup & Navigation/Organization
Definition:	Style and markup determine the visual appearance of the web site. The navigation and organization determine how the visitor moves through the site.
Justification:	Presenting a Unified Picture - An important goal for each agency's collective World Wide Web services is to offer each user full access to the entire expanse of the distributed collection, regardless of the point at which the user enters the system. Reaching the goal of providing the convenience of "one-stop shopping" in a widely distributed system may require that each server sponsored by the agency, in addition to serving its own particular constituency, provide links to other organizational servers. In some cases it is useful for 'virtual servers' or servers which knit together disparate resources, to make a strong attempt to appear integrated, through common styles, buttons, environments, tools for the user, etc.
Specifications:	Web pages should be usable by all major clients to ensure equitable access to the information. Browser-specific HTML should be avoided.
Recommendations:	**General** ▪ Every site page should have a unique title. This helps visitors save web pages based on content. ▪ The title and top level heading for a Web site should be the same. ▪ Include appropriate header comments, such as HTML version. ▪ Every title/heading should reference the theme of the Web site. ▪ Paragraphs should be clear and concise. ▪ Horizontal rules can be used to separate dissimilar paragraphs. ▪ Text highlighting (italics, bold, underline) should be used sparingly. ▪ Footers should be separated from the body by a horizontal rule. ▪ Footers should provide logical navigational aids, consistently throughout the site ▪ The Web site footer should include the 'contact link' for the

Deleted: For browser compatibility, pages should be designed for a minimum of browser versions of 4.0.

responsible party, the last date the document was updated, and text navigation links, if possible.

- Agency logos should be used where appropriate.
- Large documents should be divided logically.
- Write to the current HTML standard.
- Proprietary markup should be avoided.
- Consider "file inclusion" for standard page elements, such as footers, headers, images, etc. to ensure easier maintenance and consistency of pages.

Navigation/Organization

- Each agency page within a Web site should have a link to the agency's default/index page, and the agency's default/index page should have a link to the State's default/index page.
- Staff should be assigned to check periodically to avoid 'dead links'· When the Web site is moved to a new location, leave for visitors a forwarding URL or utilize a redirect to point to the new site.
- Use graphical references, such as color, icons, wallpaper, consistency of fonts, etc., to give Web visitors a sense of location or local environment.
- Provide search capabilities for large or complex WWW sites.
- Fonts: use only cross-browser, cross-platform compatible fonts.
- Editorial style: each agency has its own identity and should have its own style.
- Shockwave and Flash should be avoided due to accessibility issues – if used, layout and/or text alternatives must be provided.
- Site design structure needs to allow for entry from any page. Visitors may arrive at any page via search engines - don't expect users to arrive only through default or top-level pages.
- Keep navigational choices simple. Categorize or group site links to help your visitor navigate through the site.
- Don't use the organization chart to organize site – use the top 10 services provided by your agency. Determine the list of tasks a user might do on your site
- Use current stats on web site access, most visited pages, and non-working pages.
- An "About the agency" link that's prominent and informative.
- FAQ, site map, and/or site search are all useful.
- Don't make user go more than 5 clicks deep to find something.
- Language denoting an official West Virginia state agency web site
- Sites with extensive navigation links at the top of the page should consider using a "Skip Navigation" link for accessibility.

Page Design

- Forms: Make sure forms are accessible. Strive to have all forms "submittable" online. This increases ease of use of filling out applications for people with disabilities as well as making it much more convenient for general users.
- Meta tags should be used to assist in the site's searchability.

	Use page headings to let your visitor know where they are.
	- Name your graphics! – 'alt' tags are very important.
	- Use universal fonts if not using CSS.
	- Screen Size: Make sure it is not too big - so much so that the user needs to scroll a lot. One way to avoid any such problem is to create a "scalable" design that expands and contracts with screen size.
	- Page lengths - We would avoid setting limitations on page lengths unless the download time exceed the 7 second download time rule. (Webmaster discretion)
	- Pages should be compliant with HTML 4.0.

- Area -

☑ Internet/Intranet ☐ Network ☐ Operating ☐ Data Standard ☐ Security

List Keyword or Metadata:	Internet, Web, Style, Markup, Naviagation

Provide the Status of this technology area: ☑ Under Review ☐ Rejected ☐ Accepted

Audit Trail

Creation Date:	10/25/04	Date Accepted/Rejected by Standards:	12/1/04	Date Accepted/Rejected by ITC:	
Reason for Rejection:					
Last Date Updated:		Date Last Reviewed:			
Reason for Update:					
Updated By:					
Web Location:	Please Add				
Purchasing Standard:		Date of Purchasing Standard:			

Formatted Table

Deleted: 5

Formatted Table

Formatted Table